

Basil Crow House
State Route 154
Victor vicinity
Monroe County
Missouri

HABS No. MO-1217

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69-VICT.V,
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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

BASIL CROW HOUSE

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Location: 0.2 mile north of intersection of unnamed gravel road with State Highway 154, 0.4 mile west of the South Fork of the Salt River, Victor vicinity, Monroe County, Missouri.

USGS Florida 7 1/2' Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 15.600890.4368420.

Present Owner: United States of America, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District (August 1978).

Present Use: Vacant. Located in the Clarence Cannon Dam and Reservoir Project Area.

Significance: The Basil Crow House is an example of a small double-pen log house, a form originating in the Upland South and transferred west with the migrants to Missouri. The westward movement of the Crow family--from Tidewater Maryland to Kentucky to Missouri in three generations--provides a particular case of the stages of westward expansion in the United States.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Circa 1840.
2. Architect/builder: Unknown. It is assumed that Basil Crow constructed the house after he took possession of the land.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The Basil Crow House is located in the west half of the southwest quarter of Section 17, Township 54 North, Range 8 West. The following references are from the Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Monroe County Courthouse, Paris, Missouri.

1835 Original Plat Book, August 13, 1835. 80 acres.

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- 1847 Warranty Deed, May 21, 1847. Recorded in Book I, page 58. Basil and Maria Crow to Samuel Crow. This transfer occurred because of the default on a \$324 mortgage from 1844.
- 1855 Partition Deed, November 17, 1855. Recorded in Book 0, page 294. Samuel Crow to Frank Crow. Samuel Crow died, and Catherine, his widow, was made the custodian of the son's inheritance. There were eight children.
- 1868 Warranty Deed, November 12, 1868. Recorded in Book W, page 559. Frank D. Crow to Jane Tyler. 40 acres for \$100.
- 1901 Quit Claim Deed, September 3, 1901. Recorded in Book 48, page 39. Mary E. Tyler to Stephen Tyler. 40 acres.
- 1905 Warranty Deed, July 26, 1905. Recorded in Book 59, page 436. Stephen Tyler to William M. Tyler. 40 acres.
- 1905 Warranty Deed, December 16, 1905. Recorded in book 60, page 52. William M. and Mary E. Tyler to Andrew M. Ricks. 6/7 interest for \$1371.43.
- 1919 Warranty Deed, March 12, 1919. Recorded in Book 78, page 631. Andrew M. and Allie B. Ricks to Forrest G. and Hazel T. Menefee. 80 acres for \$6400.
- 1920 Warranty Deed, February 27, 1920. Recorded in Book 81, page 123. Forrest G. Menefee to Carl A. Popkes. 80 acres for \$7600.
- 1922 Warranty Deed, April 7, 1922. Recorded in Book 83, page 516. Carl A. Popkes to Weco B. Popkes. 1/2 interest in 80 acres for \$4000.
- 1923 Executor's Deed, March 1, 1923. Recorded in book 84, page 125. Ernest W. Popkes and Harry W. Popkes, executors of the will of Weco B. Popkes, to Carl A. Popkes. 1/2 interest.
- 1957 Warranty Deed, March 14, 1957. Recorded in Book 125, page 260. Weco Baron Popkes et al. to Lyle and June P. Popkes. 80 acres.

1973 Warranty Deed, October 2, 1973. Recorded in Book
165, page 271. Lyle H. and June Popkes to the United
States of America. 80 acres for \$32,000.

4. Original construction: The house constructed by Basil Crow was a two-room log house with an exterior gable-end chimney at the north end. Although the two rooms were not equal in size, the house may be considered a double-pen house, a type familiar in the Southern Tidewater (Glassie). The planked logs (hewn inside and out to a rectangular section), and neat half-dovetail corner joints are features common in the Tennessee-North Carolina Blue Ridge region (Glassie). The house was covered with weatherboards on three sides only and has always had a front porch along the west side, where there are no weatherboards. The fenestration on the west side--window-door-door-window--is the most prevalent configuration on double-pen houses found in the area (Hunt). The other original feature of note is the wide opening in the log wall between the two rooms. The smaller north room has been used as a kitchen/dining room, the larger south room as a living room/bedroom.
5. Alterations and additions: A two-room frame addition was built along the east (rear) wall. This was most likely constructed early in the twentieth century. The original use of these rooms is unknown, but the north room was later made into a kitchen and the south room into a bedroom, to accomodate extra family members who had moved in.

A loft was created over the larger (south) room of the original house, with the west walls being raised by two logs added on top of the original plate. Whitewashed floor joists for the loft rested between the two additional logs and provided a nailing surface for later ceiling boards in the first-floor room. The loft space was probably reached by a ladder. This alteration, as well as most of the others, cannot be dated.

Wall openings were altered in the following manner: The north wall fireplace and chimney, probably constructed of stone, was removed and a window, four-over-four, was put in its place. An internal brick chimney for a stove replaced the exterior chimney. The vertical wainscoting in the north room might have been added at the same time. The front window of the south room was enlarged at some point, but it has been removed altogether. The south (right) door on the west elevation appears to be a replacement, as it is hung from decorative late nineteenth-century hinges.

Other interior alterations include the replacement of the floor boards, increasing the height of the floor by about 4", and the removal of the loft joists and ceiling, possibly in the early 1970s. Exterior alterations include the laying of a concrete front porch slab. The last alteration was the removal of a number of logs near the south (right) end of the west elevation.

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated with the House:

The trickle of Upland South pioneers into Monroe County in the 1820s became a flood in the 1830s. The lure of relatives and friends already in Missouri and their letters home describing the rich land and timber of the northeastern part of the new state (joined in 1821) increased the migration. Sons of first and second generation east coast families were likely to move west, settling in Tennessee or Kentucky, and their own sons pushed even farther west. The Crow family followed this pattern. Edward Crow had settled in Tidewater Maryland by 1750. His son Samuel, after fighting in the Revolutionary War, moved to Kentucky. Samuel's son Basil, at the age of thirty-four, and his brother, Dr. Samuel J. Crow, moved in 1830 to what was soon to become Monroe County, Missouri. Basil married Maria Blandford and all but disappeared from history as one of the countless farmer-pioneers in the westward expansion. His brother, though, was remembered as one of Monroe County's most "beloved doctors."

The house remained in the Crow family until 1868. It then passed through the Tyler, Ricks and Menefee families, until Carl Popkes purchased the property in 1920. Popkes is remembered as a bachelor-farmer who lived alone in the small house. It remained in the Popkes family until they were bought out by the Federal Government in 1973.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: None located.

2. Bibliography:

a. Primary Sources:

Berrey, Mrs. J.C., Perry Missouri. Telephone conversation, August 15, 1978. Mrs. Berrey was the niece of Carl Popkes.

"Genealogy of Some Monroe County Families." In the
Dulaney Memorial Library, Paris, Missouri.

Hunt, Karen (Platz) and O'Brien, Michael J. "National
Register Nomination Form: Basil Crow Log House and
Farmstead." Copy in Washington, D.C., office of the
National Register includes two photos, taken in
1976-77. Nomination prepared in conjunction with
Historic Resources Survey, University of Nebraska,
Cannon Reservoir Human Ecology Project, 1977.

b. Secondary Sources:

Glassie, Henry. Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of
the Eastern United States (Philadelphia: University
of Pennsylvania Press, 1968).

Marshall, Howard Wight. "The Concept of Folk Region in
Missouri: The Case of Little Dixie." Dissertation,
Indiana University, 1976.

Prepared by Travis C. McDonald
Architectural Historian
Historic American Buildings
Survey
August 1978

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Basil Crow House is a
single-story structure consisting of an original double-pen
log house and frame addition at the rear.
2. Condition of fabric: Poor. The combined effects of aging,
salvage (in which many of the architectural features of the
building have been removed), and vandalism have taken their
toll.

- B. 1. Overall dimensions: Original log house: 30'6" (four-bay
front) by 17'8".
Rear frame addition: 30'6" by 10'3"

2. Foundations: Limestone slabs, laid one or two high, on grade, around the outside walls.
3. Walls: Horizontal weatherboards (4-1/2" exposure), with plain cornerboards, cover the north, south and east walls of the house. The west wall has not been covered by siding, leaving the structural log walls exposed. This pattern is not uncommon in the region on structures whose front facades are sheltered by full-width porches. The two outside edges of the west wall were once covered with wide planks nailed to the logs to protect the corner joints.
4. Structural system: The original house has bearing walls of logs, hewn on both interior and exterior faces to a thickness of 7" and joined at the corners by half-dovetail notches. The interstices between the logs are filled with split-wood chinking and lime-base daubing. The intersection of the north and south portions of the east and west walls with the interior wall dividing the two rooms shows a combination of square notching and half-lap joining. The gables are framed with studs. The rear addition consists of light wood framing using milled lumber.
5. Porches: An open porch extends across the full width of the west (front) elevation. Its shed roof is supported at the front by six square wood posts. The floor, undoubtedly wood planks originally, has been replaced by a concrete slab.
6. Chimneys: The log house originally had an exterior end chimney (now removed, probably of stone) centered on the north wall. The house now has an interior brick chimney in the north room, a foot to the east of the ridge, against the partition between the two rooms. It is a stove chimney, supported by an elbow brace on the wall. Another stove chimney is located at the partition between the two rooms in the frame addition. Both chimneys are plain, without corbeling.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: There are two doors on the west (front) elevation. They are molded four-panel doors, framed with plain-board casings.

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- b. Windows: Two windows are also located on the front elevation, between each door and end wall. They are six-over-six, double hung, and are framed with plain boards and slip sills. Six-over-six windows are also located on the north and south elevations of the log buildings, with more elongated two-over-two windows on the three exterior sides of the frame addition.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The log section has a moderately pitched gable roof, and the front porch has a lower pitched shed roof, which extends from the eaves of the main roof. The rear addition also has a shallow-pitched shed roof, springing from the eaves of the main roof. All roof surfaces are covered with wood shingles.
- b. Cornices: There are plain boxed cornices, with plain frieze boards, on all roof edges.

C. Description of Interior:

- 1. Floor plans: The Basil Crow House consists of a two-room log structure, with a two-room frame addition extending the length of the rear wall. The original log structure is an example of an asymmetrical double-pen house, the south room being approximately 16' square (inside dimensions) and the north room approximately 12' by 16'. As is the custom in this type of house, both of the rooms have exterior access on the front face. The north room of the original house was the kitchen/dining room, and the south room was the living room/bedroom. Behind (to the east of) the original kitchen, in the addition, is a more recent kitchen, and behind the living room/bedroom is a second bedroom.
- 2. Stairways: None. The sleeping loft added later over the south room of the log cabin was probably reached by a ladder.
- 3. Flooring: Tongue-and-groove boards, 5 1/2" wide in the north room of the cabin, 3-1/2" wide in the other rooms, are used for flooring.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Interior walls of the original house are the whitewashed interior surfaces of the log walls with plain-board baseboards. Walls in the addition are lath-and-plaster covered with wallpaper.
5. Doorways and doors: The two rooms of the original log house are joined by a wide cased opening in the dividing wall. All doorways in both the log and frame sections have plain casings. All interior doors have been removed.
6. Mechanical systems: The building was originally heated by a single fireplace on the north wall of the north room and later by a pair of stoves attached to the central chimney.

D. Description of Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The Basil Crow House sits, facing west, at the western edge of a wide area of bottom land formed by the South Fork of the Salt River. To the west is a steep hill covered by forest. A mile to the north is the confluence of the Middle and South Forks of the Salt River.
2. Outbuildings: One outbuilding remains extant: the root cellar at the southeast corner of the house. The cellar is constructed of rough limestone, covered with a more recent coat of cement, and is reached through a bulkhead entrance, in a wood-frame. Outbuildings no longer standing include a barn, storage shed and chicken house.

Prepared by: Clayton B. Fraser
Project Supervisor
Historic American
Buildings Survey
September 1978

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in cooperation with the St. Louis District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in compliance with Executive Order 11593, as a part of mitigation efforts connected with the construction of the Clarence Cannon Dam and Reservoir Project Area, in portions of Monroe and Ralls County, Missouri. The project was completed under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, and Kenneth L. Anderson, Principal Architect. Recording was carried out during the summer of 1978 by Clayton B. Fraser, Project Supervisor; William T. Morgan (University of South Florida) and Travis C. McDonald (University of Virginia), Architectural Historians; Barbara A. Hendricks (University of Texas), Project Foreman; and Student Architects Dwight H. Burns (Texas Tech University), W. Michael Coppa (University of Virginia), Stephen H. Lauf (Temple University), and Michael K. Murdock (University of Texas). The data was edited in July 1979 by J.A. Chewning, Architectural Historian in the HABS Washington office. Photographs were taken by David J. Kaminsky in August 1978 and by William C. Haines between February and May 1979.